

## Grade 4 – 5 Creative Writing

### Course Description

This course aims to introduce students to writing non-expository, non-argumentative composition that is not necessarily “logical” or “analytical” – in other words, “creative writing.” I’m especially interested in exploring how awareness of the present moment as well as irrational thinking could be resources for young writers. We will be reading and writing intensely in two genres—poetry and fiction—and discussing each other’s work as a group. Each student will produce and revise at least four pieces, some of which will find their way into our class’s literary magazine.

### WEEK 1

Monday

*AM*

Journal Entry: Who are you?

- Introductions
- Discuss the five senses and vivid details. Use Basho haiku as example.
- Each student is given a mirror. Take 10 minutes to look at your face. What do you see? Then take 25 minutes to write a paragraph or two of pure description.

*PM*

- Relaxation / Awareness Exercise – what is it like to experience the world in this moment, free of judgment and thought?
- Write a bio poem!
- Several students share their bio poems.
- Class discussion: What qualities do effective poems have?

Tuesday

*AM:*

- Journal Entry: What does a birdsong smell like? Feel like in your hands? What does the taste of birthday cake frosting sound like?
- Introduction to Figurative Language. Figurative vs. Literal. What is the difference between metaphors and similes?
  - Read “Daffodils” by William Wordsworth. Discuss its similes.
  - Read “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” by Robert Frost. Discuss its metaphors.

*PM*

- Read and discuss Emily Dickinson poem “I’ll tell you how the sun rose” (#204)
- Students get in pairs. Student #1 writes the first line of the poem: “I’ll tell you how \_\_\_\_\_.” The first student fills in the blank and describes some process using figurative language.

Wednesday

*AM*

- Journal Entry: If you were a hot dog and starving, would you eat yourself?
- **The Cat & The Fiddle**

- How is this Mother Goose rhyme an example of personification? Have we read other examples of personification this week?
- Read and discuss Langston Hughes' "April Rain Song."
- Get in groups of 3 and rewrite the poem using whatever personification you choose.

*PM*

- Discuss alliteration, assonance, rhyme, rhyme schemes, and onomatopoeia. Have students come up with tongue twisters.
  - Students write bio poems about someone make-believe, using the poetic devices that they've learned about today.

Thursday

*AM*

- Have students perform *Macbeth* 4.1. Discuss poetic devices in the witches' spells. What is the relationship of language to reality? Imagination?

- Students write their own magic spells/incantations (for either good or evil).

*PM*

- Students continue working on their incantations.

Friday

*AM*

- Journal Entry: What are you experiencing right now?

*PM*

- Poetry Coffee House: Students share their poems from the week. Bravo!

## WEEK 2

Monday

*AM*

- Journal Entry: Write a story titled "The World's Worst Sandwich."
- What is a story? Discuss the Witch's Hat.
- Read several of Aesop's fables.
- Have the student begin writing their own fables.

*PM*

- Students write an anti-fable.
- Several students share their fables with the class.
- Discuss the importance of conflict in fiction.

Tuesday

*AM*

- Journal Entry: What are you afraid of?
- Witch's Hat Game
- Think of a situation in which a long-held fear or anxiety that you have comes true (this should be a situation which could, but has not yet happened). Now, using the third-person mode of narration, write a scene describing a fictional version of yourself dealing with the situation.

*PM*

- Students share their “greatest fear” stories.
- Read excerpt from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*.
- Discuss characterization (direct and indirect), setting, conflict, plot, mood, diction.

Wednesday

*AM*

- Journal Entry: How would you define “evil”?
- Read and discuss the Greek myth of Pandora, retold by Emilie Kip Baker.
- Design your own monster!

*PM*

- Design your own hero!
- Student begin their monster/hero stories and continue working on them at home.

Thursday

*AM*

- Journal Entry: What do you like about your story? What do you think could be improved about it?
- Students get in pairs and share their stories with one another, filling out a Story Evaluation Form.

- Students begin revising their stories.

*PM*

- Students continue revising their stories.
- Several students share their stories, sparking a class discussion.

Friday

*AM*

- Journal Entry: What are you experiencing right now?

*PM*

- Presentation of work in “coffeehouse” format. What have we learned? Must writing have a goal? What is a story? What is a poem?